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ABSTRACT

Prior research has shown that the media play an agenda-setting role in political campaigns. A theoretical model was developed to investigate intrapersonal agenda's relationship with certain contingent factors. To test the model a study of the intrapersonal agenda (personally perceived salience of public issues) was then conducted as part of the 1988 presidential primary in Travis County, Texas. Four hundred and four registered voters (63% of those asked) completed interviews. Results demonstrated clear relationships among the political campaign, attention to newspaper campaign stories, and interpersonal discussion of the issues. Nonetheless, and contrary to earlier research, the findings showed no relationship between the personally perceived salience of all the issues and personal experience of them. In addition, the findings suggest that political affiliation, a factor that has not been given proper attention in previous agenda-setting studies, has some impact on intrapersonal agenda. The effects of political affiliation and personal experience on people's perceived salience of particular issues warrant further study. (One diagram and 14 tables of data are included; 25 references and an appendix containing operational definitions of the variables of the study are attached.) (SG)

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A THEORETICAL MODEL OF INTRAPERSONAL AGENDA

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A THEORETICAL MODEL ON INTRAPERSONAL AGENDA

After the three benchmark agenda-setting studies in the late 1960s and the first half of the 1970s by McCombs and Shaw and other scholars in the field, the relationship between issues and subjects prominently emphasized in the mass media (media agenda) and the salience of such topics in the minds of the public (public agenda) has been solidly established. However, as McCombs (1976) states in his review of the agenda-setting literature, "No one contends that agenda-setting is an influence process operating at all times and all places in all people." McCombs and other scholars point out that a variety of factors intervene in the basic process of agenda setting, that is, from media agenda to the public agenda. These factors, such as age, education, interest, need for orientation, past knowledge, party affiliation, media behaviors, interpersonal discussion and candidate perceptions are simply called "contingent conditions" for the agenda-setting functions.

These factors may either exert positive or negative impact on the media agenda-setting function. In the past ten years or more, a number of studies have been conducted to examine effects of these contingent conditions. The 1976 presidential election study by Weaver, Graber, McCombs and Eyal provides empirical evidence of effects of these factors on the agenda-setting function (Weaver, et al., 1981). However, effects of these variables have been examined respectively or separately in their

relationships with media effects.

Introduction

Although media effects on society may be salient and pervasive, few people would contend that the media exert a monolithic impact on every issue and in every aspect. They do not influence all people in all settings. Since the Chapel Hill, North Carolina study first provided empirical evidence for media agenda setting effects, a large number of studies have been devoted to the investigation of important contingent factors' effect on the role of the media as an agenda setter. It has been well established that the media exercise selected influence based on individual or group differences. In most cases, it is no longer adequate to match aggregate agendas of media with aggregate agendas of the public based on individual or group differences.

Previous studies have identified several important contingent factors, which either restrain or enhance the agenda-setting functions of the media. Some of the studies addressed certain contingent factors on the media agenda as a whole, others focused on the influence of the factors on the media agenda setting for specific issue(s). In contrast, how the public agenda at the intrapersonal level is influenced by the contingent conditions has not been given full-scale investigation, although some implications may be drawn from previous studies of this aspect.

The concept of the intrapersonal agenda, along with interpersonal agenda and perceived agenda, was first differentiated by McLoed (1974). While elaborating on the agenda setting theory, McCombs puts the three agendas under the title of public agenda (1981).

It is clearly of academic value to examine what factors affect the formation of the intrapersonal agenda. The purpose of this study is to establish an interaction model to investigate the intrapersonal agenda's relationship with certain contingent factors. There are two arguments here. First, overall, the public agenda originates from personal perceptions of public issues, or say, may be regarded as an aggregate agenda of salience of public issues in the mind of each individual in the public. So a close investigation of intrapersonal agenda will no doubt contribute to the building of the agenda-setting theory. Second, as Noelle-Neumann argues, mass communication effects cannot be properly understood, if we do not simultaneously study structures in a broad context (1956). A factor-interrelated model may provide us a clear picture overall. It is likely that a significant relationship that exists while observed solitarily simply disappears when examined in connection with other factors or is in effect a reflection of relationship(s) underlined by other factors in a broad structure.

Variables to be examined in the model of this study are those which have been proved important in previous agenda-setting studies. They include political interests, media use (mainly

newspaper reading here), interpersonal discussion, personal experience of issues (obtrusiveness), political affiliation (party identification) and the salience of issues to individuals (intrapersonal agenda). (Operational definitions of the six variables are in Appendix I).

Political interest is an important factor to be considered to begin with. In well established agenda-setting theory, political interest is treated as part of the concept of need for orientation. McCombs (1981) defines political interests as "a desire to keep up with what is going on in the world, and the need for information," which leads to the frequent exposure to relevant content in the media, and as "individual's scanning behavior." In previous studies which treated the concept, high need for orientation led to an enhanced agenda-setting effect compared with lower levels, and usually the relationship was monotonic (McCombs et al., 1972; McCombs and Weaver, 1973; Weaver, 1977; Cohen,1975). However, Mullins (1973) found no relationship between interest in campaign and media effects. Shaw's study (1974) shows a positive relationship. MeLoed, Becker and Byrnes (1974) found a negative relationship. The 1976 year-long study (Weaver et al., 1976) found that those with high level of interest learned more than those with lower interest. In this study, political interest is solely used as a predictor as a need for information. The argument is that like need for orientation and uncertainty, the interest is a motivator to seek information.

A number studies show a consistent pattern of a positive relationship between media exposure and media agenda setting effects. For instance, Mullins discovered that the effect increased with media exposure (1973). Weaver, McCombs and Spellman found evidence that a higher level of exposure was associated with increased perceived salience of the Watergate issue (1975). McClure and Patterson reported similar findings (1976). The 1976 study (Weaver, et al.) also found similar results. This study mainly uses newspaper reading as a media predictor, although it could have used both newspaper and television exposure separately or have used an aggregate media exposure index. On how to treat different types of media exposure, there is no consensus. Some studies found newspapers more influential but have limitions; some found television more significant; others used an aggregate media measurement and with the similar results. But Shaw and mcCombs' study (1977) suggests that newspapers were the prime movers in defining the agenda of issues for Charlotte, North Carolina voters in the 1972 campaign. Also, the 1976 study (Weaver, et al.) indicates that during the primary season newspapers were a chief agenda setter followed by television. Winter (1981) warned against the risk of drawing spurious conclusion by using an aggregate of media exposure.

Interpersonal communication also is a matter of dispute. Some studies found it had a positive effect on the media agenda setting function, while others found that increased interpersonal discussion reduced the media's influence. McCombs and Shaw (1972)

found that increased interpersonal discussion reduced media agenda setting; Mullins discovered that an increase in interpersonal discussion facilitated the effect. Atwater's study (1985) suggests interpersonal discussion posed a potential barrier to the agenda-setting effect. A study by O'Keefe (1982) indicated that those not engaged in interpersonal communication are more open to the media effect. As we see, the studies are limited to matching media agendas with interpersonal agendas. However, in terms of its relationship with intrapersonal agenda, this study predicts that interpersonal communication strengthens or reinforces the intrapersonal agenda.

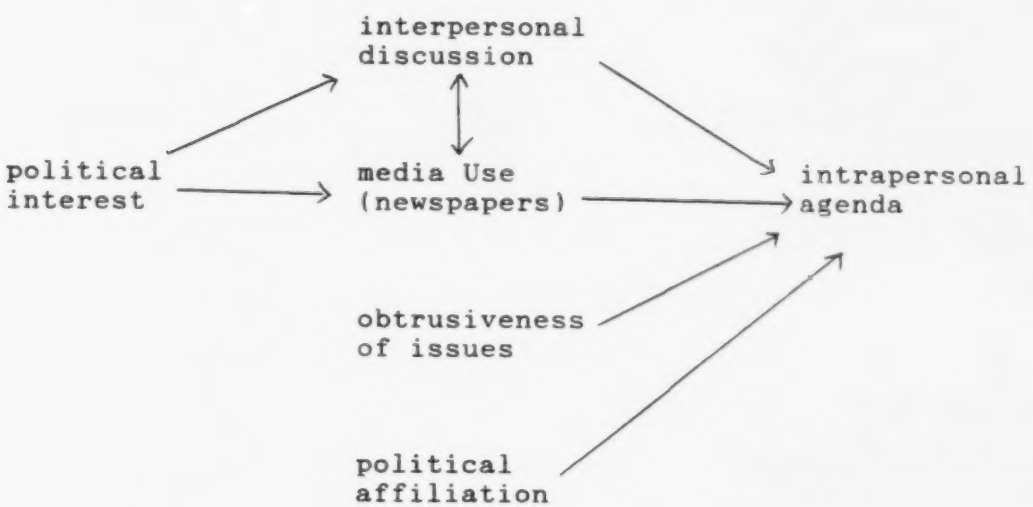
The previous findings on the issue of obtrusiveness opposed to unobtrusiveness revealed, although not consistently, a relationship between the obtrusiveness of issues and media effect. Zecker (1978) and Winter (1980) analyzed a variety of individual issues and found media agenda setting effects only clear for unobtrusive issues. Blood found that the nature of issues have obvious effects although he abandoned the use of the division of the obtrusiveness and unobtrusiveness. Eyal's study (1980) indicates that the unobtrusiveness of issues is related to agenda setting effects. The 1976 study (Weaver, et al.) shows that during the primary season, the unobtrusiveness of public issues consistently accounted for more media effects than the obtrusiveness, which means that relationships between media agendas and public agendas were clearly high on unobtrusive issues and low on obtrusive ones.

Political affiliation as a contingent condition has not been give much attention in agenda setting studies so far. Only Suine and Borre (1975) matched public issues across partisan groups. One of the reasons seems that since television began playing dominant role in presidential politics, several studies conducted in the 1960s and the earlier 1970s demonstrated that party identification collapsed in the voter decisions (Kraus and Davis). However, in analyzing the 1976 Ford-Carter campaign Chaffee and Choe found pre-campaign and last-minute deciders voted mainly on the basis of party affiliation, while only voters not heavy in partisanship were clearly susceptible to media effect (1980). Based on the results of a study of the 1982 House and Senate election, Reid and Solely found that the major party affiliation cannot be easily overlooked. A study (Smith, 1985) of a local election in Kentucky showed a strong influence of partisanship on voters. The argument simply was that voters' political affiliation may influence their perception of importance of various issues. So political affiliation may act on their personal agendas while it may not affect the aggregate public agenda. In other words, it may restrain or inhibit media effects on intrapersonal agenda.

Intrapersonal agenda (personally perceived salience of public issues) is the subject of investigation in this study. In a number of studies, intrapersonal agenda was used to predict media agenda setting effect on the public agenda. None of them has solely treated it as a dependent variable to examine its

relationships with the contingent factors. For example, the 1976 study (Weaver, et al.) consistently examined the relationship between intrapersonal agendas with media agendas. This study aimed to go one step further to merely investigate the pattern of relationships between intrapersonal and those contingent factors.

With the intrapersonal agenda as the dependent variable, the theoretical model for this study, graphically presented, looks like:



This model is presumed to have two levels: Communications and effects. At the first level, political interest, media exposure and interpersonal discussion are presumed interrelated and interact with each other. It cannot be claimed which one decides the other. At the second level, four variables (media use, interpersonal communication, personal experience and political

affiliation) are supposed to be, in varied degrees, associated to the intrapersonal agenda, either facilitating or inhibiting it. The relationship between the intrapersonal agenda and media exposure (newspaper reading) is presumably weak due to the intervening of the other factors. The relationship between it and interpersonal communication is hypothesized to be positive: The higher interpersonal discussion, higher priority of selected issues on the intrapersonal agenda. The role of personal experience of a given issue is predicted to hinder media effects on the intrapersonal agenda. Different political affiliation leads to different priorities of public issues on personal agendas. Intervening effects of the four contingent factors on the intrapersonal agenda are examined on four public issues, one by one, separately instead of as an aggregate index. The four issues are unemployment, budget deficits, poverty and trade deficits.

Methods and Procedure

This study is part of the public opinion survey on the 1988 presidential Super-Tuesday primary in Travis County, Texas, which was conducted under the direction of Dr. McCombs, Chair of the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas-Austin. All variables suggested in the proposal of this study were adopted in the survey questionnaire. The were conducted for four days. Respondents were registered voters in Travis County. The response rate was 63 percent. Four hundred and four completed interviews were achieved. Answers to a number of the questions were recoded

through an intercoder reliability procedure. Pattern analysis (crosstabulation and Chi-square test) and multiple regression analysis were conducted on data related to the topic of this study.

Findings

The results of the first level of analysis of the relationships defined for the model of this study are tabulated in Table 1 through Table 8. Most of the relationships, to varying degrees, reflect the trends predicted by the model, although some are more closely correlated than others. The only relationship which does not manifest itself as expected is the one between attention to newspaper campaign stories and personally perceived salience of public issues selected for this study. At the first level of the model, Table 1, 2 and 3 demonstrated clear relationships among political campaign, attention to newspaper campaign stories and interpersonal discussion of the issues. Table 1 shows a clear trend of the relationship between the interest in the election and newspaper reading of campaign stories. Among those who expressed low interest in the campaigns only 12.8 percent paid high attention to newspaper campaign stories, 48.2 percent paid some attention, and 39 percent did not pay attention at all. Among those who expressed high interest in the campaigns, 46.7 percent paid a great deal of attention to newspaper campaign stories, those paying somewhat attention and no attention were respectively 36.8 percent and 16.5 percent. The

difference between people of low and high interests is considerably significant ($X^2 = 52.35$, $p. < .001$).

A relationship also exists between political interest and interpersonal discussion of the 4 campaign issues (see Table 2) though not as clear-cut as the one between the interest and newspaper reading. Moreover, although the majority in both groups of high and low interest (ranging 41 percent to 53 percent) reported having some discussion with family members, friends or colleagues about the issues, people with a high level of interest had more frequent interpersonal discussion of the issues than those with low level of low interest. This is especially clear on the discussion of budget deficits and trade deficits. The proportion of those with high interest and frequent interpersonal discussions of the two issues to those with lower and the same frequency of discussion are respectively 38.3 percent to 16.3 percent and 30.4 percent to 12.8 percent. The differences are quite significant (see Table 2). On the relationship between reading newspaper campaign stories and interpersonal discussion of the selected campaign issues, the 3 x 3 tabulation (Table 3) indicates that people paying high attention to newspaper campaign stories have more frequent discussion of the issues than those paying no attention, and the difference is also highly statistically significant (see Table 3).

The relationships defined for the second level of the model, are shown in Table 4 through Table 8. At this level, the personally perceived salience of the issues (intrapersonal

agenda) is the dependent variable.It is presumed to be subjected to the effects of the four independent variables (newspaper reading, interpersonal discussion of the issues, personal experience of the issues and political affiliation). The relationship of the newspaper reading with the personal agenda of the issues is not directly reflected (see Table 4). But only with the control of interpersonal discussion, does the relationship appear among people not having interpersonal discussion on two issues of unemployment and poverty (see Table 5). Also the relationship is relatively weak ($X^2 = 9.396$, $p. < .05$; $X^2 = 7.00$, $p. < .05$). Moreover, the results show a negative direction (See the table).

However, a strong relationship consistently shows between interpersonal discussion of the four issues and the personally perceived salience of the issues being discussed. The direction of the relationship indicates: the more interpersonal discussion of the issues, the more salience attached to the issues on one's personal agenda (see Table 6 for the pattern of the relationship). The high statistical significance of the relationship ranges from $X^2 = 58.32$, $p. < .001$ to $X^2 = 38.70$, $p. < .001$.

Nonetheless, contrary to the prediction of the model, no relationship shows between the personally perceived salience of all the issues and personal experience of them. The results are given in Table 7.

On the relationship of the personally perceived salience of the issues with political affiliation, the analysis yields some significant and meaningful results. The relationship appears on the issues of unemployment and poverty but not on budget and trade deficits. As Table 8 clearly shows, on the issues of unemployment and poverty, people with Democratic affiliation (denoted as category 1) who have high salience of the issues on their personal agenda have much higher percentages (54.7 percent and 57.9 percent respectively) than people with Republican affiliation (denoted as category 3) having the same agenda (20.8 percent and 20.8 percent respectively). In addition, the relationship is highly statistically significant (X^2 =27. 29, p. < .001; X^2 = 30.52, p. < .001). The pattern of the relationship is clearly shown in Table 8.

However, as the purpose of this study is designed to examine how the variables are mutually correlated and simultaneously interact with each other at the two levels of the study model, it is necessary and proper to go a step further and apply higher level statistical methods to analysis of the data. (Also, two more variables are introduced into the model at this point: attention to television campaign news and personally perceived salience of the issue of economy in general; see Appendix I for the operational definitions of the two variables). As we see, the pattern analysis (crosstabs) only looks at the simple relationship of two variables each time and loses a certain amount of variability due to collapsing measurement scales of the

variables into fewer categories. A higher level analysis can provide a more accurate picture of the relationships defined in the model of this study while simultaneously examining the relationships together.

At the first level of the model, the relationships between political interest, media use and interpersonal communication are supposed to go in both directions. In other words, three of them interact and influence each other. The Pearson correlation coefficient is thought to fit the purpose. The results in Table 9 indicated that between a consistent relationship exists between political interest, media use and interpersonal discussion of the campaign issues.

At the second level of the model, multiple regression analysis, simultaneously examining the relationships of intrapersonal agenda as the dependent variable with the five independent variables, provides a rather accurate picture of the relationships. As Table 10 through Table 14 show, among the five independent variables, interpersonal discussion of the five campaign issues is a dominant factor in predicting personally perceived salience of the issues. The results consistently show its stronger relationship with the making of personal agenda across the five issues, in contrast with the other four variables. In addition, of the five independent variables, the other two which also turn out to affect the salience of the campaign issues on personal agenda are attention to newspaper campaign articles and political affiliation. On the issue of

unemployment, both variables show effects in predicting the personal agenda, to lesser degrees compared with the interpersonal discussion, though. Furthermore, while in addition to the interpersonal discussion, political affiliation has additional power in predicting the intrapersonal agenda on the issue of poverty, the newspaper reading shows some effect on personal agenda of the general economy issue. But on the issues of budget and trade deficits, both have no effect on the personal agenda. Moreover, like the first level analysis, the multiple regression does not show the existence of any relationship between personal experience of the five campaign issues and personally perceived salience of the issues as the model predicts (See Table 10 through Table 14). In other words, personal experience is not a feasible predictor of the formation of the intrapersonal agenda. Like personal experience, television campaign news viewing does not have any influence in forming the intrapersonal agenda (See the same tables).

Discussion

The study findings demonstrate that at the first level of the model, political interest, media use and interpersonal discussion of the campaign issues are closely correlated. It is logical to state that the three factors are mutually influencing each other. However, it may not be claimed that one of them decides the others, or vice versa. Their relationships go in both directions: higher interest in the campaign may enhance the exposure to relevant content in the media as well as

interpersonal discussion of the content, and increased media exposure and interpersonal discussion in turn heighten the interest while at the same time, they may facilitate each. Or it may be said that media exposure and interpersonal discussion increase the interest. This interaction of the three factors may suggest the pattern of mass communication during the intensive political event like the presidential election. It may be proper to call this level of the model the communication level.

The results indicate the relationships at the second level, which may be defined as the effect level. The second level furnishes a picture not as straight and clear-cut as those at the first level. More careful and closer examination is required. The results reveal that interpersonal discussion among family, friends or co-workers is shown as a dominant factor in shaping the salience of the selected issues on personal agendas. This may well suggest the existence of strong effects of second level communication following mass communications. On the other hand, news media, at first glance at the study findings, seem only to have a weak impact on the formation of intrapersonal agenda as the results show. And the effect only shows on certain issues. Also, the effect mainly comes from newspaper exposure, and television viewing seems to have an influence on the shaping of the personal agenda. The findings seem contradictory to previous solid studies. Here are three explanations. First, it should be kept in mind that the purpose of this study is to explore how intrapersonal agenda rather than general public agenda is

influenced by the intervening factors. The two types of agendas are quite different. The general public agenda is an aggregate of each individual's perception of the salience of current public issues. The media effect on the general public agenda is at the macro level. The influence on the intrapersonal agenda is at the personal or micro level. In addition, there is a methodological difference between the two types of agendas. The general public agenda is formed by observing how the salience of public issues is reflected on the recognition of the public on an incremental basis. The intrapersonal agenda is to measure the salience of issues within individual internal frame of reference. Second, the results (Table 10 and Table 14) which show media effect (mainly newspapers) indicate the opposite direction of the effect in comparison with that of the interpersonal discussion (Beta values for newspaper reading are negative). This suggests that media effect on the intrapersonal agenda hinders rather than facilitates that of the interpersonal discussion. Or it may be argued, as the Atwater study suggests, that the interpersonal discussion works as a barrier to the effect of the media, but with overwhelming power. Third, the question is whether media effect only has limited force to influence the priority of issues on the intrapersonal agenda and only on certain issues. The study results seem to lead us to make this conclusion. However, a careful examination of the results indicates that the media may have indirect effect on intrapersonal agenda through interpersonal discussion, although its direct effect is

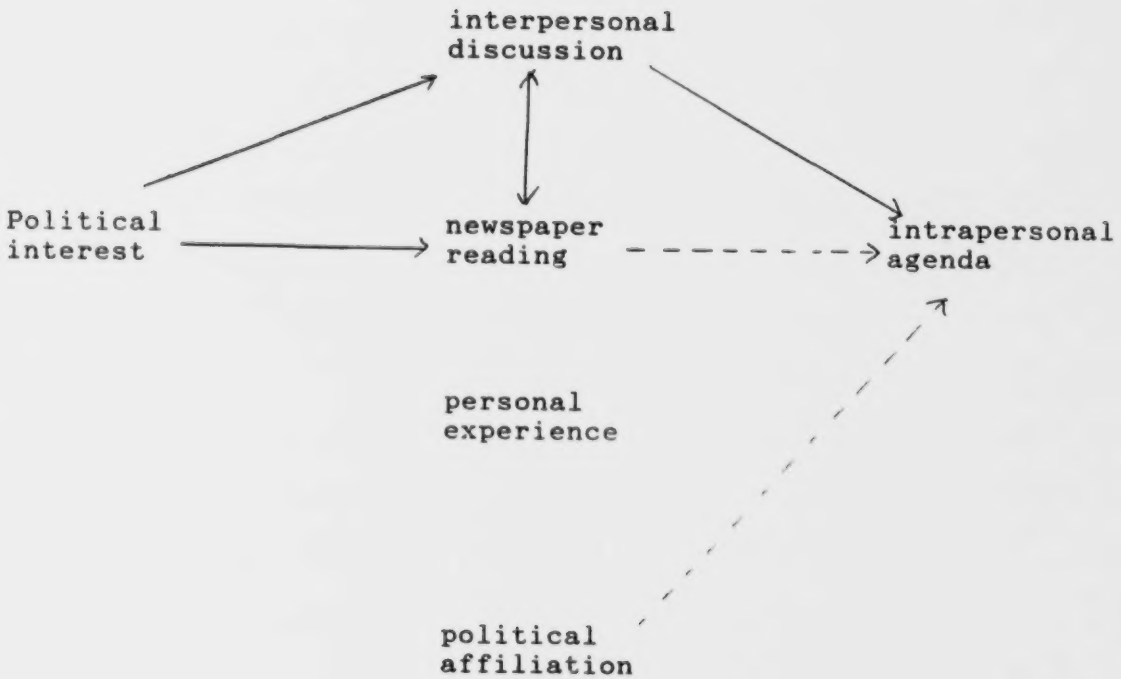
relatively limited. The results of analysis of the relationships between political interest, media exposure and interpersonal discussion at the first level of the model shows a consistent and relatively close relationship exists between media exposure and interpersonal discussion. As a matter of fact, media exposure, to a great extent, provides topics for interpersonal discussion, and increased discussion heightens the interest, which leads to further exposure to the media. No doubt, in today's modern society, the mass media are a dominant information provider, compared to any other sources of information. The media directly provide people with issues and topics through exposure or indirectly through interpersonal communication, although personal experience is, to some extent, a direct source of topics for interpersonal discussion. So, the logical explanation should be that media exposure has indirect impact on intrapersonal agenda by providing topics on interpersonal discussion while the latter, following mass communication, has a stronger impact on the shaping of the intrapersonal agenda and leads it in certain direction.

Nevertheless, the relationship of personal experience to the intrapersonal agenda predicted by the model of this study fails to be supported by the results. This is in conflict with previous studies which proved that personal experience has an effect on the intrapersonal agenda (for example, see the 1976 study by Weaver et al.). The possible explanation for this may be the fact that most of the respondents in the survey were early voting-

deciders. A further study of the relationship may be needed with methodological improvement.

Furthermore, as the model predicts, political affiliation indeed has some impact on intrapersonal agenda. This finding agrees to some degree with Chaffee and Choe's study that found that political affiliation may be a factor in predicting the agenda setting function. This study proves that political affiliation, a factor that has not been given proper attention in previous agenda-setting studies, can influence perceived salience of public issues on the personal agenda. In keeping with common sense, it is true that people's political affiliation may shape their preference for certain issues so as to bring their personal agenda under the influence of their political affiliation. Also, as the results show, political affiliation only has an effect on the issues of unemployment and poverty, not on other issues. In this sample, the number of Democrats is much higher than that of Republicans in considering the two issues very important. We may conclude that people's political affiliation may influence the salience of certain issues but not others, depending on the nature of issues concerned.

In accordance with the results of the study, the model should be revised as follows:



In this revised model, political interest, media exposure and interpersonal discussion interact and facilitate each other at the communication level. At the effect level, interpersonal discussion is a dominant factor in formulating intrapersonal agenda. Reading newspaper campaign articles may have a direct counterbalance to the effect while it has indirect impact on the agenda through interpersonal discussion. Political affiliation may influence people's perceived salience of particular issues depending on the nature of them. And the effect of personal

experience needs to be further investigated.

TABLE 1

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Political Interest	Newspaper Reading		53.35	***

* = P. < .5 ** = P. < .01 *** = P. < .001

TABLE 2

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Political Interest	Interpersonal Discussion			
		Unemployment	9.44	**
		Budget Deficits	27.63	***
		Poverty	9.25	**
		Trade Deficits	21.85	***

TABLE 3

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Interpersonal Discussion	Newspaper Reading			
		Unemployment	10.25	*
		Budget Deficits	25.17	***
		Poverty	17.99	***
		Trade Deficits	24.76	***

TABLE 4

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Intrapersonal Salience	Newspaper Reading			
		Unemployment	5.02	NS
		Budget Deficits	1.04	NS
		Poverty	4.70	NS
		Trade Deficits	1.54	NS

TABLE 5

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Controlled by	X^2	Sig
Intrapersonal Salience On Unemployment	Newspaper Reading	Interpersonal Discussion (Value = 1)	9.396	*
		No discussion		
Intrapersonal Salience On Poverty	Newspaper Reading	Interpersonal Discussion (Value = 1)	7.00	*
		No discussion		

TABLE 6

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Intrapesonal Salience	Interpersonal Discussion			
		Unemployment	58.23	***
		Budget Deficits	38.70	***
		Poverty	51.63	***
		Trade Deficits	39.48	***

TABLE 7

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Intrapersonal Salience	Personal Experience			
		Unemployment	0.974	NS
		Budget Deficit	2.016	NS
		Poverty	1.036	NS
		Trade Deficit	0.098	NS

TABLE 8

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	On Issue	X^2	Sig
Intrapersonal Salience	Political Affiliation			
		Unemployment	27.29	***
		Budget Deficit	0.704	NS
		Poverty	30.52	***
		Trade Deficit	0.662	NS

TABLE 10

Multi-Regression Analysis
With Personally Perceived Aslience
of Unemployment as Dependent Variable

Step	MultR	Rsq	Adjrsq	F(Eqn)	SigF	RsqCh	Fch	Sigch	Variable	BetaIn
1	.364	.132	.130	61.07	<.001	.132	61.86	<.001	Interpersonal discussion	.364
2	.409	.168	.163	40.24	<.001	.035	16.97	<.001	Political affiliation	-.193
3	.429	.184	.178	29.94	<.001	.016	7.93	<.01	Newspaper reading	-.129
4									Televison viewing	
5									Personal experience	

N = 403

TABLE 11

Multi-Regression Analysis
With Personally Perceived Aslience
of Trade Deficits as Dependent Variable

Step	MultR	Rsq	Adjrsq	F(Eqn)	SigF	RsqCh	Fch	Sigch	Variable	BetaIn
1	.247	.061	.057	26.02	<.001	.061	26.02	<.001	Interpersonal discussion	.247
2									Political affiliation	
3									Newspaper reading	
4									Televison viewing	
5									Personal experience	

N = 403

TABLE 12

Multi-Regression Analysis
With Personally Perceived Aslience
of Poverty as Dependent Variable

Step	MultR	Rsq	Adjrsq	F(Eqn)	SigF	RsqCh	Fch	Sigch	Variable	BetaIn
1	.408	.167	.164	80.12	<.001	.167	80.12	<.001	Interpersonal discussion	.408
2	.465	.216	.212	55.07	<.001	.050	25.19	<.001	Political affiliation	-.231
3									Newspaper reading	
4									Televison viewing	
5									Personal experience	

N = 403

TABLE 13

Multi-Regression Analysis
With Personally Perceived Aslience
of Trade Deficits as Dependent Variable

Step	MultR	Rsq	Adjrsq	F(Eqn)	SigF	RsqCh	Fch	Sigch	Variable	BetaIn
1	.339	.115	.113	52.04	<.001	.114	52.04	<.001	Interpersonal discussion	.339
2									Political affiliation	
3									Newspaper reading	
4									Televison viewing	
5									Personal experience	

N = 403

TABLE 14

**Multi-Regression Analysis
With Personally Perceived Aslience
of General Economy as Dependent Variable**

Step	MultR	Rsq	Adjrsq	F(Eqn)	SigF	RsqCh	Fch	Sigch	Variable	BetaIn
1	.288	.083	.081	36.30	<.001	.083	36.30	<.001	Interpersonal discussion	.288
2									Political affiliation	
3	.312	.097	.093	21.52	<.001	.014	6.26	<.05	Newspaper reading	-.121
4									Televison viewing	
5									Personal experience	

N = 403

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Appendix I

Operational Definitions of Variables of Study

1. Political interest. How interested are you in following the presidential election this year?

Not at all interested___ Somewhat interested ___ Very interested___

2. Newspaper reading. How much attention have you paid to articles in the newspaper about the presidential primary campaigns?

___ A great deal ____ Some ____ Very little

3. Television viewing. How much attention have you paid to news on TV about the presidential primary campaigns?

____ A great deal ____ Some ____ Very little

4. Interpersonal discussion. How much have you talked with your family, friends, or people at work about each of the following issues during the past month?

	A great deal	Somewhat	Not at all
Unemployment	_____	_____	_____
Budget deficits	_____	_____	_____
Poverty	_____	_____	_____
Trade deficits	_____	_____	_____
Economy in general	_____	_____	_____

5. Personal experience. Have you had any personal experience with any of the following five questions we just talked about?

	No	Yes
Unemployment	_____	_____
Budget deficits	_____	_____
Poverty	_____	_____

Trade deficits _____ _____

Economy in general _____ _____

6. Political affiliation. IN national politics do you consider yourself a Republican or Democrat? [If D or R] A strong or weak _____?

1. Strong Democrat
2. Weak Democrat
3. Independent
4. Weak Republican
5. Strong Republican

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